
Huntsville Spring Branch Clean Up a Success!

By Susan Weber, Cleanup Chair for DES

On Saturday, April 5, the storm clouds parted after sunup to reveal a refreshingly blue sky. Seventy-one volunteers arrived at the old Visitor Center at Gate 1 to help with the task that lay ahead—to clean up decades of trash deposited by floods into the bottomlands of Huntsville Spring Branch (HSB) and McDonald Creek..

As part of the Great American Clean Up, and sponsored by Keep America Beautiful, the City of Huntsville and its volunteers were also cleaning up a 2-mile stretch of HSB between Drake Avenue and Redstone, and they too had about 70 volunteers. The



Huntsville Canoe Club also took part in the Great American Clean Up, getting tons of trash and appliances out of Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge in Decatur.

We had about 10 canoes that were divided between the two creeks. Boy Scout Troop 308 focused on McDonald Creek, which had the worst concentrations of trash. Colonel Devlin helped the troop in the bottomlands at the north end of the clean up area. The rest of the volunteers were dropped off at various locations up and down the creek. NASA volunteers primarily walked and canoed about 1 ½ miles of Huntsville Spring Branch.

The Directorate of Environment and Safety (DES) had 6 group leaders to transport volunteers, help with the clean up, and to be on hand in case of an emergency. We also had two volunteers from the Olin Environmental Research team who brought an air boat and a john boat. The boats helped transport people to other banks of the creek, and gathered all the bags of trash that volunteers left at creek side. Volunteers built a monument of trash at the south end of creek road. Keith Roberts and Steve Anderson of Olin should get special recognition because of the backbreaking work they did by moving tons of trash from creek banks to the trash pile.

On Monday, Chugach employees picked up all the neat piles that were made by volunteers and hauled it to the city landfill. The tonnage weighed in there was almost exactly 10,000 pounds from our volunteers in that one 3-hour effort. In addition, Chugach removed several blockages from the creek before the clean up and fixed Creek Road to make it passable for the event. The tonnage they removed in that early effort was 18,880 pounds, giving a total of trash and stuff removed as over 14 tons! Chugach crews under the guidance of David Dollar and Charles Demers

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deserve kudos for what they did. We could not have had a clean up if it had not been for their work repairing the road and getting trees and trash out of the Creek.

I have to mention one person that was pointed out to me as an exceptional worker. I saw him jumping in the woods and back out with large amounts of trash in tow. It reminded me of a phrase my mother used about someone working "like killing snakes", and that effort was given by Kenny Reynolds from RTTC. He had seen Channel 19 news the night before when they helped get the message out about the clean up, and he came out for the event. Kenny was one of many tireless workers we had that day, and I can't say enough good about all of them.



Every volunteer that came out is very much appreciated and will get a letter of thanks from DES. On Earth Day, we will recognize NASA as the group having pulled in the most bags and tires. We hope to make the Clean Up an annual event, and we would like to see 200 people out there next year, scouring the bottomlands for everything from household trash to 55 gallon drums, tires, toys, and shopping carts. When a volunteer sees the beauty of the tupelo swamps that are on either side of McDonald Creek, one feels they have done something very special in returning them at least in part to their pristine condition.

Tennessee Valley Vipers Booster Club

Anyone who is interested in going on Road Trips to see the Tennessee Valley Vipers play, here's your chance. The Booster Club has planned to take five trips to include one to Birmingham. All of these trips are up and back with the exception of the Memphis game. The Memphis trip will be go over on Saturday, spend the night in Tunica, & come back Sunday. The trips are as follows:

19 April 03--Louisville, KY
31 May 03--Columbus, GA
21 June 03--Birmingham, AL
5-6 July 03--Memphis, TN (overnight in Tunica, MS)
26 July 03--Macon, GA

Anyone interested in joining in on any of these trips call Lori Martin at 842-2155 for more info. AF2 football is an exciting game so come & enjoy!!!!

Lori Martin, 2-2155
Road Trip Coordinator for Tennessee Valley Vipers Booster Club
Directorate of Logistics/Ammo Div/Ammo Supply